

ARTICLES, LITERATURE, AND VIEWS

THE
LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
MILLENNIAL STAR.

No. 8.

DECEMBER, 1843.

VOL. IV.

HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

Continued from page 161.

MEANTIME our translation drawing to a close, we went to Palmyra, Wayne county, N. Y., secured the copyright, and agreed with Mr. Egbert Grandon to print five thousand copies for the sum of three thousand dollars.

I wish to mention here, that the title page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates which contained the record which has been translated, the language of the whole running the same as all

Hebrew writing in general; and that said title page is not by any means a modern composition either of mine or of any other man's who has lived or does live in this generation. Therefore, in order to correct an error which generally exists concerning it, I give below that part of the title page of the English version of the Book of Mormon, which is a genuine and literal translation of the title page of the original Book of Mormon, as recorded on the plates:—

THE BOOK OF MORMON,

AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY THE HAND OF MORMON, UPON PLATES, TAKEN FROM THE
PLATES OF NEPHI.

Wherefore it is an abridgement of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites; written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile; written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and revelation.

Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by the way of Gentile—the interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgement taken from the book of Ether, also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to heaven; which is shew unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off for ever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations. And now, if there are faults, they are the mistakes of men; wherefore condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.

The remainder of the title page is, of course, modern.

A commandment of God and not of Man, to Martin Harris. Given at Manchester, New York, March, 1830, by Him who is eternal.

I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am He, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world: I having accomplished and finished the will of him

whose I am, even the Father, concerning me; having done this that I might subdue all things unto myself, retaining all power even to the destroying of Satan and his works at

the end of the world, and the last great day of judgment which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof, judging every man according to his works and the deeds which he hath done. And surely every man must repent or suffer, for I God am endless, wherefore I revoke not the judgments which I shall pass; but woes shall go forth, weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, yea, to those who are found on my left hand; nevertheless it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written endless torment.

Again, it is written eternal damnation; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men altogether for my name's glory; wherefore I will explain unto you this mystery, for it is meet unto you to know, even as mine apostles. I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing even as one, that you may enter into my rest. For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it? for, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for endless is my name, wherefore—

Eternal punishment is God's punishment;
Endless punishment is God's punishment:

wherefore I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, jun., in my name; and it is by my almighty power that you have received them, therefore I command you to repent—repent lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not! how exquisite you know not! yea, how hard to bear you know not! For, behold, I God have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I; which suffering caused myself, even God the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit; and would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink; nevertheless, glory be to the Father. And I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men; wherefore I command you again to repent lest I humble you by my almighty power, and that you confess your sins lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my spirit. And I command you that you preach nought but repentance, and show not these things unto the world until it is wisdom in me, for they cannot

bear meat now, but milk they must receive; wherefore they must not know these things lest they perish. Learn of me and listen to my words—walk in the meekness of my spirit and you shall have peace in me. I am Jesus Christ, I came by the will of the Father, and I do his will.

And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor seek thy neighbour's life; and again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God, which is my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites are a remnant; that they may believe the gospel, and look not for a Messiah to come who has already come.

And again, I command thee that thou shalt pray vocally as well as in thy heart! yea, before the world as well as in secret; in public as well as in private; and thou shalt declare glad tidings, yea, publish it upon the mountains and upon every high place, and among every people that thou shalt be permitted to see. And thou shalt do it with all humility, trusting in me, reviling not against revilers. And of tenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Saviour, and remission of sins by baptism and by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost.

Behold this is a great and the last commandment which I shall give unto you concerning this matter; for this shall suffice for thy daily walk even unto the end of thy life. And misery thou shalt receive, if thou wilt alight these counsels, yea, even destruction of thyself and property. Impart a portion of thy property, yea, even part of thy lands, and all save the support of thy family. Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer. Release thyself from bondage. Leave thy house and home, except when thou shalt desire to see thy family and speak freely to all; yea, preach, exhort, declare the truth, even with a loud voice; with a sound of rejoicing, crying—"Hosannah! hosannah! blessed be the name of the Lord God."

Pray always, and I will pour out my spirit upon you, and great shall be your blessing, yea, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth and corruptibleness to the extent thereof. Behold, canst thou read this without rejoicing and lifting up thy heart for gladness, or canst thou run about longer as a blind guide, or canst thou be humble and meek, and conduct thyself wisely before me; yea, come unto me, thy Saviour. Amen.

Whilst the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, we still con-

tinued to bear testimony, and give information, as far as we had an oppor-

tunity; and also made known to our brethren that we had received commandment to organize the church, and accordingly we met together for that purpose, at the house of the above mentioned Mr. P. Whitmer, being six in number, on Tuesday the sixth day of April, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and thirty.

Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our heavenly Father, we proceeded, according to previous commandment, to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in the things of the kingdom of God, and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a church according to said commandment which we had received. To these they

consented by an unanimous vote. I then laid my hands upon Oliver Cowdery and ordained him an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; after which he ordained me also to the office of an elder of said church. We then took bread, blessed it and brake it with them, also wine, blessed it and drank it with them. We then laid our hands on each individual member of the church present, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and be confirmed members of the Church of Christ. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree—some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord and rejoiced exceedingly. Whilst yet together I received the following commandment.

Revelation to Joseph Smith, jun. Given April 6th, 1830.

Behold, there shall be a record kept among you, and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof, and to build it up unto the most holy faith, which church was organized and established in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April.

Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; for his word ye shall receive as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith, for by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good and his name's glory; for thus saith the Lord God, him have I inspired to move the cause of

Zion in mighty power for good, and his diligence I know, and his prayers I have heard, yea, his weeping for Zion I have seen, and I will cause that he shall mourn for her no longer; for his days of rejoicing are come unto the remission of his sins and the manifestations of my blessings upon his works.

For, behold, I will bless all those who labour in my vineyard with a mighty blessing, and they shall believe on his words, which are given him through me by the Comforter, which manifesteth that Jesus was crucified by sinful men for the sins of the world; yea, for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart. Wherefore it becometh me that he should be ordained by you, Oliver Cowdery, mine apostle—this being an ordinance unto you, that you are an elder under his hand, he being the first unto you, that you might be an elder unto this Church of Christ, bearing my name, and the first preacher of this church unto the church and before the world, yea, before the Gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo, to the Jews also. Amen.

We now proceeded to call out and ordain some others of the brethren to different offices of the priesthood, according as the spirit manifested unto us, and after a happy time spent in witnessing and feeling for ourselves the powers and the blessings of the Holy Ghost, through the grace of God bestowed upon us, we dismissed with the pleasing knowledge that we were now individually members of, and acknowledged of God, "The Church of Jesus Christ," organized in accordance with commandments and re-

velations given by him to ourselves in the last days, as well as according to the order of the church as recorded in the New Testament.

Several persons who had attended the above meeting and got convinced of the truth, came forward shortly after, and were received into the church, among the rest my own father and mother were baptized to my great joy and consolation, and about the same time Martin Harris and A. Rockwell.

Revelation to the Church of Christ which was established in these last days, in the year of our Lord, 1830. Given at Manchester, New York, April, 1830, in consequence of some desiring to unite with the Church without re-baptism who had previously been baptized.

Behold, I say unto you that all old covenants have I caused to be done away in this thing, and this is a new and everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning. Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times, it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the straight gate by the law of Moses, neither

The following persons being anxious to know of the Lord what might be their respective duties in relation to this work,

Revelation to Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith, Joseph Smith, sen., and Joseph Knight, sen. Given at Manchester, New York, April, 1830.

Behold, I speak unto you, Oliver, a few words. Behold, thou art blessed and art under no condemnation. But beware of pride, lest thou shouldst enter into temptation. Make known thy calling unto the church, and also before the world, and thy heart shall be opened to preach the truth from henceforth and for ever. Amen.

Behold, I speak unto you, Hyrum, a few words, for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy heart is opened and thy tongue loosed, and thy calling is to exhortation, and to strengthen the church continually; wherefore thy duty is unto the church for ever, and this because of thy family. Amen.

Behold, I speak a few words unto you, Samuel, for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy calling is to exhortation and

by your dead works; for it is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant, and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old; wherefore enter ye in at the gate as I have commanded, and seek not to counsel your God. Amen.

I enquired of the Lord and received for them the following:—

to strengthen the church; and thou art not as yet called to preach before the world. Amen.

Behold, I speak a few words unto you, Joseph, for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy calling also is to exhortation and to strengthen the church. And this is thy duty from henceforth and for ever. Amen.

Behold, I manifest unto you, Joseph Knight, by these words, that you must take up your cross, in the which you must pray vocally before the world as well as in secret, and in your family, and among your friends, and in all places. And, behold it is your duty to unite with the true church, and give your language to exhortation continually, that you may receive the reward of the labourer. Amen.

On Sunday, April 11th, 1830, Oliver Cowdery preached the first public discourse that was delivered by any of our number; our meeting was held by previous appointment at the house of Mr. Whitmer, Fayette; large numbers of people attended, and the same day the following were baptized; viz., Hyrum Page, Catherine Page, Christian Whitmer, Anne Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Elizabeth Whitmer, and on the 18th day Peter Whitmer, sen., Mary Whitmer, William Jolly, Elizabeth Jolly, Vincent Jolly, Richard Z. Peterson, and Elizabeth Anne Whitmer, all by Oliver Cowdery in Seneca Lake.

During this month of April I went on a visit to the residence of Mr. Joseph Knight, of Colesville, Broom county, N. Y., with whom and his family I had been previously acquainted, and of whose name I have above mentioned as having been so kind and thoughtful towards us

while translating the Book of Mormon. Mr. Knight and his family were Universalists, but were willing to reason with me upon my religious views, and were as usual friendly and hospitable. We held several meetings in the neighbourhood; we had many friends and some enemies. Our meetings were well attended, and many began to pray fervently to Almighty God, that he would give them wisdom to understand the truth. Amongst those who attended our meetings regularly was Newel Knight, son to Joseph Knight. He and I had many serious conversations on the important subject of man's eternal salvation; we had got into a habit of praying much at our meetings, and Newel had said that he would try and take up his cross, and pray vocally during meeting; but when we again met together, he rather excused himself. I tried to prevail upon him, making use of the figure, supposing that

he should get into a mudhole would he not try to help himself out? and that we were willing now to help him out of the mudhole. He replied, that provided he had got into a mudhole through carelessness, he would rather wait and get out himself than have others to help him, and so he would wait until he should get into the woods by himself and there he would pray. Accordingly he deferred praying until next morning, when he retired into the woods, where, according to his own account afterwards, he made several attempts to pray but could scarcely do so, feeling that he had not done his duty, but that he should have prayed in the presence of others. He began to feel uneasy, and continued to feel worse both in mind and body, until upon reaching his own house his appearance was such as to alarm his wife very much. He requested her to go and bring me to him. I went and found him suffering very much in his mind, and his body acted upon in a very strange manner. His visage and limbs distorted and twisted in every shape and appearance possible to imagine, and finally he was caught up off the floor of the apartment and tossed about most fearfully. His situation was soon made known to his neighbours and relatives, and in a short time as many as eight or nine grown persons had got together to witness the scene. After he had thus suffered for a time, I succeeded in getting hold of him by the hand, when almost immediately he spoke to me, and with very great earnestness requested of me that I should cast the devil out of him, saying that he knew he was in him, and that he also knew that I could cast him out. I replied, "if you know that I can, it shall be done," and then almost unconsciously I rebuked the devil, and commanded him in the name of Jesus Christ to depart from him, when immediately Newel spoke out and said that he saw the devil leave him and vanish from his sight.*

The scene was now entirely changed, for as soon as the devil had departed from our friend, his countenance became natural, his distortions of body ceased,

and almost immediately the spirit of the Lord descended upon him, and the visions of eternity were opened to his view. He afterwards related his experience as follows:—"I now began to feel a most pleasing sensation resting upon me, and immediately the visions of heaven were opened to my view. I felt myself attracted upward, and remained for some time enwrapped in contemplation, insomuch that I knew not what was going on in the room. By and by I felt some weight pressing upon my shoulder and the side of my head, which served to recall me to a sense of my situation, and I found that the spirit of the Lord had actually caught me up off the floor, and that my shoulder and head were pressing against the beams."

All this was witnessed by many, to their great astonishment and satisfaction when they saw the devil thus cast out, and the power of God and his holy spirit thus made manifest. So soon as consciousness returned, his bodily weakness was such that we were obliged to lay him upon his bed and wait upon him for some time. As may be expected, such a scene as this contributed much to make believers of those who witnessed it; and finally, the greater part of them became members of the church.

Soon after this occurrence I returned to Fayette, Seneca county. The Book of Mormon (the stick of Joseph in the hands of Ephraim) had now been published for some time, and as the ancient prophet had predicted of it, "It was accounted as a strange thing." No small stir was created by its appearance; great opposition and much persecution followed the believers of its authenticity, but it had now come to pass that truth had sprung out of the earth, and righteousness had looked down from heaven, so we feared not our opponents, knowing that we had both truth and righteousness on our side; that we had both the Father and the Son, because we had the doctrines of Christ and abided in them, and therefore we continued to preach and to give information to all who were willing to hear.

During the last week in May, the above

* This was the first miracle which was done in this church or by any member of it, and it was done not by man nor by the power of man, but it was done by God, and by the power of godliness: therefore let the honour and the praise, the dominion and the glory, be ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

mentioned Newel Knight came to visit us at Fayette, and was baptized by David Whitmer.

On the first day of June, 1830, we held our first conference as an organized church. Our numbers were about thirty, besides whom many assembled with us, who were either believers or anxious to learn.

Having opened by singing and prayer, we partook together of the emblems of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; we then proceeded to confirm several who had lately been baptized, after which we called out and ordained several to the various offices of the priesthood. Much exhortation and instruction was given, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us in a miraculous manner—many of our number prophesied, whilst others had the heavens opened to their view, and were so overcome that we had to lay them on beds or other convenient places; among the rest was brother Newel Knight, who had to be placed on a bed being unable to help himself. By his own account of the transaction, he could not understand why we should lay him on the bed as he felt no sensibility of weakness. He felt his heart filled with love, with glory and pleasure unspeakable, and could discern all that was going on in the room; when, all of a sudden, a vision of futurity burst upon him. He saw there represented the great work, which through my instrumentality was yet to be accomplished. He saw heaven opened, and beheld the Lord Jesus Christ seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and had it

made plain to his understanding that the time would come when he would be admitted into his presence to enjoy his society for ever and ever. When their bodily strength was restored to these brethren, they shouted "Hosannahs to God and the Lamb," and rehearsed the glorious things which they had seen and felt, whilst they were yet in the spirit.

Such scenes as these were calculated to inspire our hearts with joy unspeakable, and fill us with awe and reverence for that Almighty being, by whose grace we had been called to be instrumental in bringing about for the children of men the enjoyment of such glorious blessings as were now poured out upon us. To find ourselves engaged in the very same order of things as observed by the holy apostles of old; to realize the importance and solemnity of such proceedings, and to witness and feel with our own natural senses, the like glorious manifestations of the power of the priesthood; the gifts and blessings of the Holy Ghost; and the goodness and condescension of a merciful God, unto such as obey the everlasting gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, combined to create within us sensations of rapturous gratitude, and inspire us with fresh zeal and energy, in the cause of truth.

Shortly after this conference David Whitmer baptized the following persons in Seneca lake, viz: John Poorman, John Jelly, Jerusha Smith, Catherine Smith, William Smith, Don C. Smith, Peter Rockwell, Caroline Rockwell, and Electa Rockwell.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BY ELDER AMASA LYMAN, AT THE CONFERENCE.

From the Times and Seasons.

It is with a degree of satisfaction that I address you after the variety that has graced the feast during the last few days, in which the beasts spoken of by Daniel and John have been served up in good style and rendered quite palatable.

On reflecting upon the subjects that have been agitated and discussed since the sitting of our conference, it has occurred to my mind that nothing has been said in direct reference to the Book of Mormon, a belief in the truth of which

constitutes one of the peculiar characteristics by which we, as Latter-day Saints, are distinguished from those who do not believe in any revelations but those contained in the Bible. My reasons for offering such reflections on this subject as shall be suggested to my mind, are, that they may chance to fall upon the ear of some one enquiring after the truth: being aware that I also address a number who are called with me to take a part in bearing the truth before

the world, to rend asunder the veil of darkness that has obscured the light of truth, and let it shine in the face of men. In making my remarks I shall not dwell upon the scripture, but offer some plain reasons that may be deduced from certain plain statements in the scriptures, thus learning who, according to the Bible, reason, and good logic, are deceived in believing, and impostors for teaching as do the Latter-day Saints; and believing that God ever did and ever will give revelations for the salvation of mankind; or others, for teaching as they do and professing to believe that all revelation is contained in the Bible. To carry out the investigation proposed, we shall be led to inquire after the facts upon which is predicated the necessity of revelation to any of the numerous progeny of Adam in any portion of the habitable earth. To commence, then, we ask the question, had Jehovah an object in the creation of the human race? If so, the nature of that object? that we may be prepared to judge whether it could be accomplished without revelation or not. That we may learn that he had an object, and something of its nature, we will hear the words of the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, ii. 10—"For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Here we have a statement by inspiration, in relation to the purpose of God in the creation of man, which was to make them sons of God. That we may be satisfied whether there exists a possibility that he should be foiled in his purpose or change his mind, we will hear the testimony of James i. 17—"Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning." If the apostle has told the truth in this matter, we cannot expect a change to suit the caprice of the creature man. We have already learned that the purpose of God was to bring many sons unto glory; that it was impossible to accomplish this without revelation we infer from the scriptural testimony; for, says the evangelist, "He, the Lord, came to his own, but his own received him not, but unto as many as received him, gave he power to become the sons of God, even as many

as believed on his name." By this scripture we learn that men had power to become the sons of God, by believing on the name of Jesus. The question here arises, could they have had it without? If so, then we must charge the omnipotent God with an incompetency of judgment that would disgrace beings of less capacity than himself, by calling into requisition means that the accomplishment of his work did not require. Inasmuch, then, as it was his purpose to make sons of the human race, there was left no alternative but to reveal himself, or not accomplish his object in the creation of men. From our examination of this subject thus far, we learn that the accomplishment of the object for which men were created, demanded that God should reveal himself—for, says the apostle Paul, "how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall he preach except he be sent?" Again, the justice of God requires that he should give to his creatures a manifestation of his law, that he might, in justice, bring them into judgment before him, that every creature might receive according to their works. Having reasoned thus far in relation to the principles that govern revelation, we learn that, just as sure as God did purpose from before the foundation of the world to save men, so sure it is that he purposed to reveal himself for its accomplishment. We will conclude our reasoning on this point with a reference to the declaration of Jesus, recorded by John: "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" and "no man," says the apostle, "can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." For the history of the facts from which we have made the preceding deductions, we are indebted to the Bible—and for the Bible, we are indebted to the Jews. The next thing to be examined, is the extent to which the Bible record may be applicable to the human family, as a rule to fix their future destinies in the day of retribution according to their works. To set this matter in order, and upon principles not to be mistaken, we shall commence and apportion the scriptures as they were given, and as they must appear in that day when the books are opened, and the

dead judged out of the things written in them. What portion, then, will it be by which the people anterior to the flood can be justified or condemned, but that which was revealed to them; so that the judgment of that people makes use of that portion of the Bible given to them—the people from Noah to Moses, that portion revealed to them—from Moses to Christ, that portion given to them, which takes us through the Old Testament; and when the people to whom the apostles preached the gospel shall come into judgment, it will require the word spoken to them. Thus we have used all revelations of God in both Old and New Testaments, and but a small portion of the family of man yet received their doom. Thus far our investigation has been confined to the dealings of God with that portion of the human race located on the continent of Asia, and we have made that portion of the earth, the theatre of all His wondrous works; but we will now enlarge our view of the subject, and cast a look across the wide waste of waters, where the great western continent stretches itself between the two extremities, north and south, with its unnumbered millions of inhabitants, and inquire if they bear the same relation to God as the people of Asia. If we contemplate their physical organization and mental endowments, we find them the same. If the fact that the Greek, the Jew, or the Roman were not able to “believe on him of whom they had not heard,” it was equally so with the American—so that, reasoning from analogy, we conclude them to be a part of the same great family, blessed with the same endowments, subjected to the ills of mortality, and the same inability to save themselves from the ruinous effects of the fall.

But to show to every reflecting mind, that if the Bible is true, our conclusions are correct, we will now advert to some statements in the scriptures. We commence with Acts xvii. 26—“And hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation.” We would here remark, that if there is any truth or good sense in the word of the apostle, that wherever there are nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth, they are of the same blood

—made by the same God and Father of all, consequently bearing the same relation to God by creation. But have they, we would now enquire, been equal sharers in the rich promises made for the salvation of men and revealed in Asia? Admitting the truth of the religious dogmas, which say that the Bible contains all revelations of the age, we answer they have not, for it was not until about the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, that the vast continent on which we dwell became known to modern geographers, thus opening the way that the canonical law might visit the western continent; whereas the scriptures inform us, that as early as the founding of Babel, a few years subsequent to the flood, men were scattered into all the earth, according to Genesis xi. 8—“So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of ALL the EARTH, and they left off building the city.” America, therefore, must have received her portion. But, says the grave objector to the faith of the Saints, how came they here, as the art of ship-building was not known? At the same time, however, he will tell us, with all the apparent sanctity that religion can inspire, that he believes the Bible with its account, that God took dust and made a man, and him a living soul—but still can have no conception how he could, not make men, but merely transport them to this part of the earth. For the moment we leave the objector to wonder at the deep mystery of his own ignorance, while we examine a little farther the tendency of that anti-biblical doctrine, which tells us that the Bible contains all the words of God, which word, says the Saviour, is to judge all men at the last day; to which also agrees the declaration of John, who says, Revelations xx. 12—“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” The revelator here speaks of a plurality of books, which the advocates of many of the religious dogmas of the age tell us is the Old and New Testaments—a flimsy evasion of the truth, but in perfect keeping with the bigotry and holy ignorance of the age. For present con-

venience we suppose ourselves having an existence in the time when all the numerous progeny of Adam are called into judgment before God, in whom there is no injustice whatever to be judged out of the things written in the books according to their works. The men of Asia, Africa, or Europe, might be required to pass under the ordeal of the word there written, from the fact that he might have been one of the favoured few to whom God had had respect in the day of revelation in the east; but in the vast assemblage we find a multitude whose lot has not been cast in the great theatre of revelation in Asia, who, if the popular theories of the age are correct, must have lived in ignorance of those sublime truths which are found in the Bible; so that we not only find them brought to be judged and condemned for not having kept a law they never knew, but for the first time to have the idea suggested to their minds of its existence, or the existence of a God to whom they were amenable. I speak this of those who dwelt here anterior to the discovery of this continent by the Europeans. Humanity shudders at the thought. Justice outraged, retires from the scene, while a shade, blacker than midnight, is cast on the character of that God in whom all perfection dwells. Angels unnumbered weep over

the scene. Millions of human beings consigned to eternal fire, because they have not obeyed a law they never heard. Shame—shame to the intelligent man or woman that would believe it; and condemnation and perdition to them that teach it. But John heard individuals around the throne of God, saying that they had been redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation, and were made unto God kings and priests. Revelations v. 9. And as men were not made kings and priests in Asia without revelations, we conclude that, as in God there is “no shadow of turning,” it required the same cause to produce the same effect in America. This principle carried out would extend the benefits of revelation to all people; that when they are brought into judgment, and the books opened out of which they are to be judged, it will be the law they have known, consequently by it they are either justified or condemned. Thus God is just, and the protecting ægis of the plan of salvation is universally thrown around suffering humanity. Thus the justice, mercy, and immutability of God, together with the necessities of the creature man, form the considerations that influence the counsels of omnipotence in preparing the means of salvation.

VISIT TO NAUVOO—A SKETCH.

From the Nauvoo Neighbor.

It was a cloudless morn. The sun rose in majesty and splendour, as myself and friend H— crossed the beautiful stream at the end of the town which claimed our residence. The chiming of bells in the distance and the last glimmering of the church spire, readily informed us we were leaving our homes, and for what? was the ready interrogatory. To visit the eighth wonder of the world: the city of Nauvoo and the Mormons. The forests were covered with their richest foliage; the birds sang melodiously; the prairies were covered with their numerous herds, and the plains were blended with an innumerable variegation of flowers, which lent rich fragrance to the breeze. Whilst conversing upon the strangeness of our expedition; of the expectation of so soon proving or disproving the truth or falsity of every day's report; and if true, the hazard we were about to make of losing life,

reputation and property, and the warm solicitations and anxiety of our friends for our safety in visiting a place and people said to be devoid of christianity, morality, or civilization; and other topics connected with our journey,—the time passed imperceptibly, and at the end of a delightful prairie, we were aware the sound of the winding horn informed us it was time for refreshments. A short time and we were again on our way. The day continued pleasant and warm. Crops everywhere shewed the effect of a long winter: still the exertions of the farmer seemed no where diminished. Towards evening we were ferried across a stream of considerable size and passed through a rich alluvial bottom, covered with a heavy growth of timber. Night overtook us near an indifferent-log building, at which we found entertainment for the night. Our host seemed very communicative; and, upon being

informed of our business, voluntarily gave us a detailed account of the Mormon difficulties with Missouri; of their settlement in this state; their many aggressions, &c. This account appeared very plausible, although it seemed entirely exparte, notwithstanding our worthy host assured us he had heard all to be facts. Amongst other things he informed us there was a small town called Macedonia (formerly Ramus) about twenty miles east of Nauvoo, built and inhabited almost exclusively by Mormons. We at once determined to pass through this place, as it was nearly on our route, and ere the rays of the sun illumined the horizon we were "under weigh." The country through which we passed was beautiful, with here and there a cluster of buildings which in better times had bid fair for business and happiness, but now stand half evacuated, with costly buildings unrepaired and uninhabited. The sound of the hammer and merry whistle of the carpenter had ceased. The mechanic had left his once busy shop for want of employment, and attached himself to farming for a sustenance, or sought a more suitable place for his business. Appearances were much unlike those presented some few years ago, as I passed through the same country. Then all was life, bustle, and animation. Now all is changed but hoary headed time—that keeps a steady pace onward, let the fate of man be what it may. But why this great change? there must be a cause. Our childish legislators have done what time will scarcely undo.

The day wore away pleasantly. In the afternoon the timber of Crooked Creek and its tributaries every where met our view, and passing through a delightful prairie with well fenced farms on either side, we came in view of Macedonia. Our beast seemed willing to stop in front of a public house which was by no means the worst in appearance. We were welcomed by our host; our beast being well "looked after," we set about taking a walk through the town; and imagine our surprise when we found every appearance in contrariety to what we had been informed. The buildings (which were generally new), yards, gardens, barns, &c., seemed well constructed, neatly and tastefully arranged. Macedonia is situated in the great bend of Crooked Creek, surrounded with numerous mills and good farming lands, &c. I was informed the town had been laid out only about three years; that the population is now near 500, and increasing rapidly, and that the inhabitants obtained a liberal incorporation from the Legislature at the last session. The place seemed much unlike any in my knowledge. Mechanics of most kinds seemed plentiful and busily employed. Every house seemed occupied. A beautiful

square lay near the centre of the town, on which we were informed a house for literary and religious purposes was to be erected. We had an agreeable interview with Messrs. Johnsons, Babbitt, Perkins, and others, who seemed to be intelligent and gentlemen. Mr. Babbitt, a younger gentleman, and, I was informed, a professor of law, gave us an interesting and clear epitome of the doctrine and faith of the Mormons, or, as they call themselves, Latter-day Saints, which, I must confess, much disappointed us, as it appeared, in a great many respects, unobjectionable and altogether quoted from the scriptures. We also were informed of the treatment these people received in Missouri and elsewhere, which was sadly at variance with the information we had before received; and, if correct, throws ignomy and disgrace beyond description upon the authorities of Missouri, and their vile persecutors. The night passed mostly in meditation upon the arbitrary cruelties of olden times, and methought I saw the self-same feature in the blood-stained snows of Missouri. The night wore off, and we were soon on the road to Nauvoo, passing through quite a distance of handsome and heavy timber. We crossed Crooked Creek about two miles from the town, and came on to the broad prairie of the Mississippi. The prairie here seems about 15 miles wide, and as we passed on either hand, showed the work of industry and art. Miles of land are made secure from cattle, &c., by means of a handsome ditch and sod fence. Many farms were under a good state of cultivation. Large herds of cattle might be seen in almost every direction on the uncultivated prairie.

A quick drive of a few hours brought us through the eastern portion of the city of Nauvoo, to a very eminent situation on the bluff, at which place a magnificent stone building was in progress of erection, which we at once pronounced the Temple. The majestic Mississippi showed its broad waters and numerous islands for miles. The far famed Iowa presented itself beyond, in view like a beautiful landscape. The scene is delightful from a gradual descent of about a mile to the river, and three on either hand up and down may be seen with one glance of the eye, covered with buildings of almost every description, from the humble cot to the stately mansion, harmoniously intermingled; all seemed bustle, life and business.

We were invited to the house of an elderly gentleman, who showed us every possible courtesy; and after supper were introduced to Mr. Smith the prophet. Suffice it to say we were agreeably disappointed in his person, appearance, and manners. He seemed to be very sociable and ready in conversation upon any subject. Upon his warm solicitation,

we spent the night at his house. The morning was spent in examining some very curious ancient records found with a number of mummies in good preservation, in ancient Thebes. They contain some very curious representations. Several days were very satisfactorily spent in visiting each portion of the city; and to say truth, such another scene of industry, enterprise and good order in society, I never before witnessed. Why these people should be thus basely slandered, belied and persecuted, is beyond my powers of reason. Apparently peaceable with their neighbours, of good morals and indus-

trious—turning the broad prairie into fertile fields, and making an extensive market in the most fertile part of the state.

The cruelties and persecutions heaped upon them in the state of Missouri, in point of barbarity, puts a blush upon the history of the ancient Huns, or the persecution of the Waldenses.

If people at a distance from them would go and see for themselves before believing every idle report concerning them, an innocent and unoffending people, would be saved much anxiety and misery.

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS.

PART OF A DISCOURSE BY ELDER ORSON PRATT, DELIVERED IN CONFERENCE.

Who is the Ancient of Days? This is a question frequently asked by the biblical student, especially those who have studied the prophecies of Daniel with any degree of attention. The most careless reader will have observed that the Ancient of Days is one of the most prominent personages introduced before Daniel, while he was wrapped in his prophetic visions. Daniel had previously become extensively acquainted with the future history of the world. He had seen the rise, progress, and downfall of nations and kingdoms. Four great and powerful monarchies, which should bear rule over all the earth and hold universal empire, had successively passed before him. In a former vision he had seen the last of these monarchies divided and subdivided into smaller kingdoms; and, finally, after having viewed earthly governments in their various forms from his own day down for many generations, and having seen their corruptions and great wickedness, his mind was carried onward to a time when another or fifth kingdom should be established, bearing rule in righteousness over all the earth. He saw that this last kingdom, instead of originating from those which had formerly held dominion, through the vain aspiring ambition of man, was established by the God of heaven, before which all other kingdoms wasted away till no place was found for them. These grand events of future time which opened to his astonished vision, were calculated, no doubt, to excite an intense desire to be-

come more extensively informed in relation to futurity, especially concerning the organization and establishment of the kingdom of God, which he saw was eventually to sway a universal sceptre over all the earth. The great God who is ever willing to satisfy the desires of those who honestly serve him, was pleased to unfold to him more of the particulars concerning the introduction of that glorious era when the Saints were to bear rule. The prophet was again enwrapped in a vision of the Almighty, and saw the same things which he had formerly seen, and being more prepared by experience, and more enlightened by the spirit of truth, his views were greatly enlarged. In this wonderful vision he saw the ANCIENT OF DAYS sit, clothed in great power and majesty; he was attended by unnumbered millions from the heavenly worlds—a grand council was organized upon the earth, over which he presided—the books were opened, and among the most important business which came before them, was the condemnation and judgment of some of the corrupt powers of the earth, and also the confirming of more power upon the Saints, that they might be prepared for the reception of their Great King—the Son of Man, who was to come and take the kingdom, and reign in the greatness of his splendour, in the midst of his people for ever. The Great King, having sent forth the Ancient of Days, with the grand council of heaven as messengers, to set all things in their most perfect order, at length

appears in the clouds of heaven. He comes in royal splendour, and in the greatness of his strength to the Ancient of Days, who delivers up the kingdom into his hands, and henceforth all people, nations, and languages serve and obey him. O glorious period! O happy time! How these glorious visions must have cheered the heart of Daniel in his long captivity! And how blessed, and how inexpressibly happy will that people be who inherit the earth in that day!

But who is this Ancient of Days, that is to act this glorious and conspicuous part in the grand councils of the last days, and finally deliver up the kingdom, organized and prepared, into the hands of the Great King? It cannot be the Son of God, for he afterwards comes to the Ancient of Days. It cannot be the Father, for if the Saints were prepared to meet the Father and sit in council with him, they would also be prepared to meet the Son, for the glory of the Father is equal to that of the Son. Who

then can it be? Let us reflect for a moment. The ANCIENT OF DAYS! It must be some very ancient personage, and probably the most ancient personage that ever lived in days, and hence is called by that name, in distinction from all others that lived after. But thanks be given to the Most High God, for he has not left his Saints in uncertainty about this matter, but has raised up a prophet through whom he has revealed this mystery; thus the Saints will not be left in the dark in regard to the great purposes and events of the last days. The Ancient of Days then, is ADAM—the great progenitor of the human race. He has a mission to perform for the benefit of his children, in the last times. As he performed the *first* mission on the earth in the beginning of the *first* dispensation, so he will perform a mission in the ending of the *last* dispensation. In the *first* he presided over a few; in the *last* he will preside over unnumbered millions.

TO THE CITIZENS OF ILLINOIS AND THE ADJOINING STATES.

We have published the following letter from one who attended the much-talked-of meeting at the town of Carthage, the report of which has been seized with avidity, and republished by some of the journalists of this country. Our brethren and friends will however see by the letter in what light such contemptible proceedings ought to be viewed.

Fellow Citizens,—Feeling deeply interested in the welfare of the people of the United States, and especially in the prosperity and peace of the state of Illinois, I take the liberty of addressing you, relative to the disgraceful circumstances that have recently transpired in Carthage.

It seems that there are some disappointed office seekers who feel chagrined at the result of the last August election; and now having given loose vent to their passions, have used their influence to stir up the people against the Mormons, in Hancock county, and the adjoining counties and states, with many unfounded reports against that community.

Fellow citizens: I am a citizen of Hancock county, and have been ever since the Mormons came to this county. I have traded with the Mormons and have been personally acquainted with the prophet and a number of the leading members of that society. I was in Nauvoo on business near six weeks last summer, when Joseph Smith was taken and tried, and honourably acquitted by the pro-

per authorities—so declared in my presence by C. Walker, Esq., and other honourable lawyers.

I would here remark that I am not a Mormon, neither am I contending for their religion—be that between them and their God. I am contending for those patriotic principles that caused our ancestors to fight, bleed and die.

Having the knowledge that I have of the Mormons, and the sayings and doings at Nauvoo, I feel myself called upon to say that the preamble and resolutions published in the *Warsaw Message* of a meeting at Carthage, on the 6th instant, are grossly absurd, and most of the statements unqualifiedly false, and that the meeting throughout was conducted under an unholy influence. I was present at the meeting, and know that the leaders of the said meeting are broken down office hunters, and some, if not all of them have been running to Nauvoo for votes, and because the Mormons voted for men of their choice, as free-born American citizens,

this clique was not satisfied as they did not happen to be the men of their choice this year. Thus it seems that they have suffered themselves to take the unhallowed ground of mobocracy, or so near it that we cannot make anything else of it. The *Message* states that the above meeting was convened without respect to party, and that the preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted. These statements I know to be false, as not more than one-third of the citizens present voted in the affirmative. I, with a number of others, voted in the negative, and a great many did not vote at all, being attracted by curiosity rather than any interest that they felt in the meeting.

Again, it was a Whig meeting as far as I

could discover. The president, secretary, and leading members I know to be Whigs.

I am truly sorry to see individuals who wish to be looked upon as honourable, seek for redress for a supposed injury in such a disgraceful way, instead of honouring the laws of their country by seeking legal redress, instead of pledging their lives to support principles which are illegal, unjust, and oppressive, and which would sap the foundation of our Government, support the principles of mobocracy, injure and destroy the innocent, and ultimately end in the shame and dishonour of all concerned.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN HARPER.

LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH.

Addressed to the Editor of the Times and Seasons.

Sir,—Through the medium of your paper, I wish to correct an error among men that profess to be learned, liberal, and wise; and I do it the more cheerfully because I hope sober-thinking and sound-reasoning people will sooner listen to the voice of truth than be led astray by the vain pretensions of the self-wise. The error I speak of, is the definition of the word "MORMON." It has been stated that this word was derived from the Greek word *mormo*. This is not the case. There was no Greek or Latin upon the plates from which I, through the grace of God, translated the Book of Mormon. Let the language of that book speak for itself. On the 523d page, of the fourth edition, it reads: "And now behold we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the *Reformed Egyptian*, being handed down and altered by us according to our manner of speech; and if our plates had been sufficiently large, we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us, also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record, but the Lord knoweth the things which we have written, and also, that none other people knoweth our language, therefore he hath prepared means for the interpretation thereof."

Here then the subject is put to silence,

for "*none other people knoweth our language*," therefore the Lord and not man, had to interpret after the people were all dead. And, as Paul said, "the world by wisdom knew not God," so the world by speculation are destitute of revelation; and as God, in his superior wisdom, has always given his Saints, wherever he had any on earth, the same spirit, and that spirit, as John says, is the true spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, I may safely say that the word Mormon stands independent of the learning and wisdom of this generation. Before I give a definition, however, to the word, let me say that the Bible in its widest sense, means *good*; for the Saviour says, according to the gospel of John, "I am the *good* shepherd;" and it will not be beyond the common use of terms, to say that good is among the most important in use, and though known by various names in different languages, still its meaning is the same, and is ever in opposition to *bad*. We say, from the Saxon, *good*; the Dane, *god*; the Goth, *goda*; the German, *gut*; the Dutch, *goed*; the Latin, *bonus*; the Greek, *kalos*; the Hebrew, *tob*; and the Egyptian, *mon*. Hence, with the addition of *more*, or the contraction, *mor*, we have the word MORMON, which means, literally, *more good*.—Yours,

JOSEPH SMITH.

Editorial.

WE feel ourselves much gratified in being able to continue the history of Joseph Smith, the most interesting (we feel no hesitancy in stating) of all historical records that have been published since the history of the Son of Man, inasmuch as we know that it is the history of the renewal of the covenant of God with the children of men, and of the commencement and progress of the great concluding and consummating work with the human family as to the present order of things.

We are much gratified with the light which is thrown by this history upon the book of Doctrine and Covenants—a book which, we fearlessly assert, contains more truth and scriptural doctrine than was ever before issued to the world, and by this history we learn the varied occasions and reasons that called forth the several revelations to the church given therein.

The other subjects in the present number of the STAR we trust will be found both interesting and instructive.

WE often reflect on the privileges of the people of God, which comprise the acquisition of all knowledge, for he that is faithful and endureth unto the end shall inherit all things, and if so, shall eventually come to the *knowledge* of all things; therefore it is the privilege of the Saints to continue to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and to continue to receive fresh acquisitions of intelligence, until we receive the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

If we were to say anything of our own experience, it would be that day by day adds to the confirmation in our own mind of the principles of truth. Day by day do we feel compelled to pour out our thanksgivings to the Father of lights for the knowledge of the truth of the work of the last days. Every thing that transpires in the world, of whatever nature it may be, seems compelled to yield its portion of evidence to the great work of God; it matters not what its character—whether the researches of the traveller—the discoveries of modern philosophy, unfolding principles that astound the discoverer, all, all tend to confirm the great work of God, and to manifest that the close of the present state of things is approaching, and that the people of God, in possession of his spirit, will receive the kingdom for their inheritance, and reign with him who purchased it for ever and ever. Amen.

OUR Lord in speaking of the signs of the last days, says that there shall be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear of those things that are coming on the earth; and that there should be "earthquakes in divers places."

We scarcely can take up a paper, in these days, but what there is recorded some account of an earthquake, tornado, singular comets, signs in the heavens, or some dreadful calamity, phenomenon, or circumstance, calculated to impress forcibly upon our minds the days in which we live.

Many of these signs can be explained on philosophical principles, and no doubt but all of them could, if we were only sufficiently acquainted with the philosophy of the heavens as well as of the earth; if we could unravel the mysteries of the universe, and penetrate into the designs of God. But this does not alter the principle that

is taught by our Saviour, as being a criterion whereby the Saints are to judge of the signs of the times. If the earth is convulsed by a continuous succession of earthquakes, whose repeated throes are felt all over the universe; if the earth opens and mountains are swallowed, and cities and villages are engulfed in one general ruin, and consternation is spread throughout the world; however philosophically this may be accounted for, it is one of the signs of the last days: "There shall be earthquakes in divers places."

If the winds shall be let loose from their bounds, and mighty tornadoes desolate the earth; if forests should be uprooted, villages and cities rased to the ground, and one general scene of desolation ensue; or if terrible gales should sweep the ocean, drive vessels from their moorings, and, by its fury, cause the sea to lift up itself in majesty and roll furiously beyond its bounds, spreading desolation wherever it bent its course, bidding defiance to the power and skill of man, stranding navies, and swallowing up in its fury ships and their mariners, and spreading wild dismay and general ruin; however philosophically Mr. Espy and other scientific gentlemen may account for storms, yet the finger of God is made manifest, and in them is fulfilled the saying of the prophets: "There shall be terrible tempests and whirlwinds, that shall cause the children of men to fear." "The sea shall lift up itself beyond its bounds." "The sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them, for fear of those things that are coming on the earth;" and philosophy does not alter the matter of fact spoken of by the prophets, nor remove or invalidate the signs. If, again, the stars should be removed from their orbits, or present any singular phenomenon; if there should be strange appearances in the sun, in the moon, or the heavens should shew forth their signs, although philosophy may account for these on the principle of reflection and refraction, and other known causes, it does not alter the force of that saying, nor do away with, or weaken the significance of the sign spoken of by our Saviour: "There shall be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Neither if certain comets should, in their revolutions, dash with wild fury against the earth, and cause it to "reel to and fro like a drunken man," would that circumstance invalidate the testimony of the above mentioned scripture. Or, if a fiery comet in its train, at its appointed time should come in contact with the earth, and the inhabitants thereof should be burned up through that medium, it would not invalidate that scripture which says, "the earth shall be burned up," "the earth that now is, is reserved for fire, against the judgment of the great day." We believe, however, that the signs spoken of in the scriptures will not be something vague, indefinite and uncertain, but clear, plain and intelligible, and such as will be seen and known by all the inhabitants of the earth, and such as they might take as a warning if they would be advised.

TO MISS B——, OF HALIFAX, ON ATTAINING HER 21st YEAR.

BY THOMAS WARD.

O! could my words some joy impart,
 To bless thee on thy natal day;
 Then would I twine around thy heart,
 A wreath of bliss, a happier lay;
 But since to me the power's not given,
 Nor earthly bliss without alloy;
 O! let me lead thy thoughts to heaven,